

REMARKS

The status of the application is as follows. Claims 1-7 were presented for prosecution and stand rejected. Namely, claims 1 and 3-7 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Saran et al. (EP 0875934A2) in view of Moslehi (U.S. 6,016,000), and claim 2 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Saran in view of Moslehi and Zavracky et al. (U.S. 5,976,953). Claim 1 has been amended herein. The drawings were objected to due to their lack of clarity in showing cross-sectional views and layers. New Figures 1-3 have been submitted herewith to address the drawing objection. No new matter is believed added.

Applicants submit that the new Figures 1-3 more clearly show the invention. In particular, it is clear now that Figures 2 and 3 each depict views along cross-sections A-A' and B-B' of Figure 1. In addition, it can be seen that layers are formed between metal layers 1 (in Figure 2) and metal layers 1 and metal lines 2 (in Figure 3). Further, the lower half of Figures 2 and 3 clearly depict how each via line 3 forms a partition that isolates adjacent regions of the structure.

Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 1 and its dependent claims are not obvious because the cited art fails to teach each and every feature of the invention. For instance, amended claim 1 recites "...a plurality of equally spaced parallel via lines that connect the top and bottom metal layers and partition the at least one dielectric area to form isolated areas filled with dielectric material." As noted, Saran fails to teach: (1) metalization lines that extend and connect to a metal layer to increase structural integrity; and (2) via lines that form isolated areas. Similarly, Moslehi fails to teach "a plurality of equally spaced parallel via lines that connect the top and bottom metal layers."

Moreover, there is no teaching or suggestion in Moslehi of using vias or the like to help reinforce the structural integrity of the bond pad structure. Instead, Moslehi teaches of using a hermetical seal to improve mechanical strength. Accordingly there is no motivation to combine the references as suggested in the Office Action.

Accordingly, because the prior art fails to teach or suggest each and every feature of claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1, and the claims that depend therefrom are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that anything further is necessary to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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